

Belgian Register of European Toxicologists (ERT): Registration Requirements

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1. INTRODUCTION

The European Register of Toxicologists is a service of the European Society of Toxicology, EUROTOX, established in 1994. It constitutes a list of toxicologists who excel by high standards of education, skills, experience, and professional standing. The intention is to foster competence, in practice and science, and provide the public with an authoritative source of information on toxicological competencies. Individuals who are found to comply with the requirements defined by EUROTOX and National Societies of Toxicology, and are accepted, are qualified to use the title **EUROPEAN REGISTERED TOXICOLOGIST, ERT**, with their name¹.

Toxicologists may apply for ERT certification via their National Societies of Toxicology. In a first step, National Registration Boards evaluate applications of candidates and admit successful applicants to their National Register. In a second step, upon request from the National Registers, EUROTOX certifies these individuals as ERT without further evaluation.

Applications to the **Belgian Register of Toxicologists** are open to experienced scientists engaged in the field of toxicology in Belgium and members of the **Belgian Society of Toxicology (BelTox)**, the **Belgian Environmental Mutagens Society (BEMS)**, or the **Toxicological Society of Belgium and Luxembourg (BLT)**. Applications from other countries may also be considered, provided that there is a strong, long-lasting (> 5 years), and sustainable, educational, training, and/or professional relationship with Belgium or Luxembourg.

Inclusion in the Belgian Register of Toxicologists applies for a period of 5 years, after which reregistration is required.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION

Membership in the European Register of Toxicologists aims to recognize high standards of knowledge, skills, experience, and professional standing of scientists professionally engaged in the field of toxicology.

Requirements for registration include:

- An academic education and degree (MD, PhD, MSc, Dipl., or BSc in a relevant subject).
- Documentation of basic competence in the essential areas of toxicology (see **Sections 3 and 8**) through attendance of appropriate courses, recognized qualifications, or proven practical experience and on-the-job training.
- At least 5 years of relevant toxicological experience. Years during a PhD project are typically not considered although exceptions may apply in specific and well documented cases.
- Detailed documentation of the practical toxicological training and experience, evidenced by published work and/or confidential reports or assessments.
- Current certified professional engagement in the practice of toxicology.

To consider a candidate for registration, the Belgian Registration Board will require and evaluate the documentation indicated in **Section 8**.

¹ [European Register of Toxicologists \(ERT\) - Eurotox](#)

3. APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

To apply for ERT certification via the Belgian Registration Board, candidates should provide information proving their education and experience in the field of toxicology. This includes:

- A CV containing relevant information such as details of scientific education, post(s) held, and professional activities performed.
- Documentation of academic education before commencing training in toxicology (entry level knowledge base). Before starting toxicological training leading to registration, a candidate will have been educated in a directly relevant science subject such as biomedical sciences, medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmaceutical sciences, biochemistry, biology, toxicology, food and environmental sciences, agronomy, chemistry. This basic educational background will have been acquired by attendance of a full-time taught course at a university for at least three years and documented by a university degree.
- Documentation of minimum accomplishments during training (applied knowledge base).
- In addition to basic academic education in science, a candidate will have undertaken further theoretical and practical training in toxicology and will provide evidence for achievement of the minimum standards set out in **Section 8**.
 - Acquisition of basic theoretical knowledge must be documented by credits/certificates from appropriate courses or equivalent qualifications.
 - Documentation of practical training and acquisition of hands-on experience and communication skills will be shown by publications, reports, or assessments, subject to expert opinions (see **Section 4**).
- Expert opinions (recommendation letters) evaluating the candidate's knowledge, skills, experience, and professional standing should be provided by at least two senior ERT toxicologists, preferably from different institutes, with certain justified exceptions. Supporting experts should clearly document their personal relationship with the ERT candidate to enable the assessment of the quality of the testimony.

Details on the documentation and procedures are presented in **Section 8**.

4. APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL

On a **five-year basis**, ERTs will be expected to re-affirm their registration credentials and document their continued professional awareness, education, practice, and link to Belgium or Luxembourg.

To remain registered, a candidate must be working as a toxicologist, confirm membership to BelTox, BEMS, or BLT for the past 5 years (duration of the past ERT certification period), and submit the following to the Belgian Registration Board:

- An updated CV containing relevant information such as details of post(s) held and of professional activities performed during the past 5-year period of registration.
- Confirmation of professional activity as a toxicologist in responsible positions by evidence such as a list of internal studies (with information on numbers, topics, methods used, branch of customers), list of publications, employment references, delegation into expert committees, teaching and mentoring.

- Documentation of continued professional awareness and education in Toxicology such as yearly attendance of educational courses and meetings, presentation of lectures or posters, teaching activities, activities in expert committees and similar. These activities will comprise at least five working days per year. Continued professional education should be supported, upon request, by certificates of attendance/participation.

5. BELGIAN REGISTRATION BOARD

The Belgian Registration Board consists of members from BelTox, BEMS, or BLT, appointed for 5-year renewable cycles.

The appointed members elect a Chair and benefit from the administrative support of BelTox.

The Chair and the administrative support person are responsible for:

- Collecting and processing applications for registration.
- Reminding ERT members about re-certification needs after 5 years.
- Communication between applicants and the Belgian Registration Board.
- Keeping records of the dates for the forthcoming Belgian Registration Board meetings as well as the results of the past meetings.
- Maintaining updated the registration register.

The Belgian Registration Board annually reports to BelTox the following information:

- The number of candidates applying for inclusion in the register or maintenance of registration, the outcome of applications and the names of those approved for inclusion in the register or the maintenance of registration.
- The names of ERTs who have been removed from the ERT Register.

Inclusion, exclusion or removal from the ERT Register will be decided by the Belgian Registration Board.

Members of the ERT Register must inform the Secretariat if they retire or are no longer working directly in toxicology.

In the event of a proposed removal from the ERT Register, a minimum of one month's notice will be given to provide an opportunity for personal representation, or through a representative, to the Registration Panel.

6. EVALUATION

The list of qualifications and suggested scorings for the evaluation of ERT candidates by the Belgian Registration Board members are presented in **Annexes A and B**.

7. APPEALS COMMITTEE

Appeals against the decisions of the Belgian Registration Board may be made to an Appeals Committee appointed ad hoc by the BelTox on a need basis.

The Appeals Committee will be composed of three experienced toxicologists.

A representative of the EUROTOX Registration Subcommittee can be consulted by the Appeals Committee if required.

The decision of the Appeals Committee will be binding for all parties.

8. APPLICATION DOSSIERS

The application dossier should contain:

- The application form addressed to the Belgian Registration Board, available on the registration website (<http://beltox.be/belgian-register-of-european-toxicologists>). The form contains:
 - An identification page.
 - An application checklist
 - A detailed CV including detailed documentation of theoretical and practical experience.
 - A list of publications in peer reviewed journal or study reports (non-confidential information is sufficient).
- A motivation letter
- Two recommendation letters from senior ERT toxicologists.
- Proof of payment of the application fees.

When completed, the application dossier should be submitted (in English) via the BelTox website (<http://beltox.be/belgian-register-of-european-toxicologists>).

The Belgian Registration Board will keep in strict confidentiality all information provided by a candidate if designated by the candidate as confidential.

The application must also be accompanied by the payment of a fee of 100 EUR (excl. VAT).

9. STANDARDS OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND PROFESSIONAL STANDING REQUIRED FOR REGISTRATION

Membership in the European Register of Toxicologists aims to recognize high standards of knowledge, skills, experience, and professional standing of scientists professionally engaged in the field of toxicology. Requirements for registration include:

9.1 Theoretical knowledge

A candidate for registration will need to detail their level of knowledge in each of the following topic areas (B1 – B14) that are considered as being essential for every toxicologist:

- B1. Principles of Toxicology
- B2. Laboratory Animal Science incl. 3 R
- B3. Experimental Design and Statistics
- B4. Molecular and Cellular Toxicology
- B5. Absorption, Distribution, Metabolism and Excretion
- B6. Organ Toxicology and Histopathology
- B7. Toxicology of Environmental Pollutants
- B8. Exposure Assessment
- B9. Epidemiology
- B10. Occupational Toxicology
- B11. Genotoxicity and Carcinogenicity
- B12. Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology

B13. Risk Assessment of Chemicals

B14. Clinical and Forensic Toxicology

There are two routes to meet this requirement:

- Attendance of appropriate courses, and/or
- Practical experience and on the job training.

9.2 Practical training and experience

Practical training and experience need to be demonstrated for a period of not less than 5 years and must be related to toxicology. Training will usually be on the job, based on laboratory, clinical, computer-assisted, or regulatory work.

In some cases, toxicologists will undertake research and be based in a single department / under a single named supervisor. Candidates for registration are advised to ensure at the outset that their intended course of study is evaluated by a senior ERT or member of the National Register as appropriate and applicable to the eventual target of registration.

9.3 Documentation of practical experience, communication skills, authorship

Candidates for registration will have documented their practical experience by at least 5 reports (which may be internal and/or confidential), assessments, or publications. Reports and assessments should be suitable for submission to regulatory agencies or for regulatory decision making. Publications should have appeared in relevant peer-reviewed scientific journals. It is regarded as essential that these reports and papers demonstrate a high standard of critical ability and communication skills. Critical ability and communication skills can be documented further by a record of oral presentations and through authorship of written reviews. Examples should be included with any application for registration.

10. TIMELINES

Applications for registration or re-registration should be submitted by **end of May of each year**.

Decisions by the Belgian Register of Toxicologists will be provided at the latest by **end of October of the same year**.

Successful candidates will then receive an ERT certificate provided by EUROTOX.

For the complete description please refer to Annex I-II of EUROTOX GUIDELINES:

<http://www.eurotox.com/ert/>

<https://www.eurotox.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ERT-Guidelines-for-Registration-2023-rev16OCT23.pdf>

<https://www.eurotox.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Annex-1-Learning-Outcomes-2023.pdf>

<https://www.eurotox.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Annex-2-ERT-GUIDELINES-2016.pdf>

<https://www.eurotox.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Annex-3-ERT-GUIDELINES-Glossary-2017.pdf>

**ANNEX A:
ASSESSMENT FORM (NEW APPLICANT)**

Surname applicant:

Name applicant:

Qualification	Maximum Weighting	Weighting and/or Comment
1. Education	20	
2. Continuous education	10	
3. Research experience (post-graduate)	15	
3.1. Research projects as chief scientific manager or main Investigator 3.2. Research projects as investigator 3.3. Patent application or other innovations 3.4. Theoretical knowledge B1. Principles of Toxicology B2. Laboratory Animal Science incl. 3 R B3. Experimental Design and Statistics B4. Molecular and Cellular Toxicology B5. Absorption, Distribution, Metabolism and Excretion B6. Organ Toxicology and Histopathology B7. Toxicology of Environmental Pollutants B8. Exposure Assessment B9. Epidemiology B10. Occupational Toxicology B11. Genotoxicity and Carcinogenicity B12. Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology B13. Risk Assessment of Chemicals B14. Clinical and Forensic Toxicology		
4. Professional experience	40	
4.1. Present position 4.2. Former activities and professional experience 4.3. Scientific Committees 4.4. International collaborations and technical/scientific commissions		

Qualification	Maximum Weighting	Weighting and/or Comment
5. Editorial activity	10	
5.1. Publications on peer reviewed journals 5.2. Reports 5.3. Books 5.4. Other editorial activity		
6. Teaching experience	5	
Overall score	Minimum suggested: 70/100	

Conclusion of the assessor:	
Signature:	
Date:	

ANNEX B: ASSESSMENT FORM (RENEWAL)

Surname applicant:

Name applicant:

Qualification	Maximum Weighting	Scoring and/or Comment
1. Education	20	
2. Continuous education	25	
3. Professional experience / link to Belgium	40	
3.1. Present position 3.2. Former activities and professional experience 3.3. Scientific Committees 3.4. International collaborations and technical/scientific commissions		
4. Editorial activity	10	
4.1. Publications on peer reviewed journals 4.2. Reports 4.3. Books 4.4. Other editorial activity		
5. Teaching experience	5	
Overall score	Minimum suggested: 70/100	

Conclusion of the assessor:	
Signature:	
Date:	